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**V. M. Leshchenko: Laboratornaya diagnostika gribkovykh zabolevaniy.  
(Laboratory diagnostics of fungal diseases).**

*Publ. House Meditsina, Moscow 1977, 126 pp., 71 Figs. Price 50 kop.*

The soft-cover booklet is the work of one of the prominent Soviet medical mycologists — head of the Mycological Laboratory, Central Research Institute of Dermatovenereology, the USSR Ministry of Health, Moscow. It is a practical handbook intended for physicians working in laboratories, mycologists and dermatologists. The number of copies (8000 issues) is a good evidence of a need for this work offering in a brief and illustrative manner instructions for laboratory diagnosis of mycoses. In the introductory section the author gives detailed accounts of morphology, biology, systematics of the pathogenous fungi and a classification of the diseases caused by these organisms. In a chapter devoted to methods of mycological examinations, the author recommends easy and special procedures which have been tested in his long-lasting practice. For the selection of cultivation media he rightly stresses their division into isolation, differentiation and conservation media. However, the metodological section does not cover instructions for the induction of sexual stages of dermatophytes, on the distinction of which a contemporary concept of the species diagnosis of this group of mycotic agents is based. In the chapter concerned with classification of mycotic diseases the division of pseudomycoses into surface (erythrasma, trichomycosis axillaris) and deep (actinomycosis, nocardiosis) is rather unusual. A special section of the book is devoted primarily to the causative agents of dermatomycoses. The author uses

current mode of providing information — a name of the agent and its synonyms are followed by descriptions of the host range, mode of parasitism and a detailed characterization of the morphology of paratrophical and saprotrophical stage of the fungus. Data on causative agents of visceral mycoses are complemented with basic ecological data, schematic drawings of life cycles of causative agents and with information about possibilities of a special diagnosis (experiments on animal, immunological tests). The illustrations in the book include primarily line drawings in which the author not only tries to depict the most important morphological characters of mycotic parasites, but also makes the instructions for laboratory techniques more understandable (mode of inoculation of material for cultivation media, re-inoculation of isolates, preparation of slides from cultures etc.). Among the photomicrographs even those taken by means of a scanning electron microscope are not lacking. Small errors occurring primarily in the general section of the book — (incorrect placing of *Microsporum vanbreuseghemii* in anthropophilic dermatophytes, using obsolete generic names *Trichosporum*, *Sporotrichum* etc.) do not reduce the total value of the work, whose main merit is that it can promptly provide most important information, given in a very lucid and illustrative manner. The book will be helpful to beginners providing an easy orientation in the fundamentals of the laboratory diagnosis of mycoses.

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